

Chinese object study essay sample

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Chinese Lanterns

A Chinese lantern is a hot air balloon which is small in size with a small fire suspended at an opening at the bottom. This lantern is made of paper. It is a collapsible sky or paper lantern which is purposely decorative in nature due to its bright colours. It is painted with calligraphy motifs and Chinese art. The paper lanterns are usually used for parties, festivals, and house or office decorations. These lanterns can perfectly change the room atmosphere.

This object has been in existence for the past 100 years. The initial Chinese lantern has got a shape that is more of flower like plus a holder of a candle that is supported by a cardboard base. It has got main colours which are four in number and they include: yellow, green orange and red.

Generally, a Chinese lantern is designed in a bamboo frame. It is made of oiled rice paper and a candle which provides the hot air or a fuel cell. This frame is thin in width, approximately 30cm to about 2m and has an opening at the bottom. Usually, this opening is about 10 to 30 cm and has a stiff collar that suspends the flame source and at the same time keeps it off the walls (Yinke 48).

For signalling purposes, the Chinese used hot air balloons from the 3C BC during the period of Warring states. However, their invention is associated with Liang Zhuge (181-234 CE) who used a message on sky lantern in summoning help for an occasion. For centuries, lanterns have been part of the culture of the Chinese. Initially, emperors used to hang them in their homes, temples, boats and gardens. The paper lanterns which have the red colour are considered sacred and its shape i. e. the roundness is a sign of good luck and long life. The paper lantern was found in 1883 in Toowoomba.

This could be found in the old shop of Kwong Sang and Co, some Chinese importers and merchants. Around 1887, a Chinese migrant by the name, Hock Sing went to Queensland and became the main attendant of the store. However, he was Kwong Sang and for decades, he remained the Chinese community's leader while in Toowoomba. This shop sold firecrackers, peanuts, sanctuary oils, tea, and silk as well as Chinese lantern. Diamond Lum, Kwong's son also played an important role in the Chinese - Australian relations (Yinke 120).

Ancient China used sky lanterns in wars for signalling. However, this has changed and paper and sky lanterns are very popular with children. By the end of the Chinese year, there are celebrations of the festival of lanterns whereby, plastic, paper and silk lanterns at the same time are paraded along the streets. (Yinke 46)

Despite the usage of the Chinese lanterns for all these centuries, it is a potential danger source for it can cause fire to the buildings or crops around. In addition to this, the lanterns can also be hazardous to animals should they eat their remains.

Work Cited

Yinke, Deng. Ancient Chinese Inventions. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2005. Print.